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COORDINATION QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF THE COORDINATION BODIES

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1995

SUMMARY

The present report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its subsidiary bodies in 1995 and attempts to identify key issues and problems relating to coordination that require consideration at the intergovernmental level.

During the year, ACC devoted special attention to issues relating to African economic recovery and development and agreed to launch a System-wide Special Initiative on Africa.

ACC also agreed on ways and means of promoting a coherent and coordinated system-wide follow-up to recent international conferences, in particular at the country level. In the same context, ACC reviewed the arrangements being put in place to ensure effective inter-agency coordination in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

The twenty-ninth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and ACC focused on measures to further concerted action by the United Nations system in the eradication of poverty, an overarching objective emanating from international conferences. The outcome of the meeting is reflected in this report.

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ACC continued, through its Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, to pursue the system-wide follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. It also agreed upon measures for system-wide cooperation for drug abuse control.

The triennial policy review of operational activities for development continued to provide an important framework for inter-agency efforts to enhance the coordination and impact of development activities, particularly at the country level. The Secretary-General, in consultation with ACC, through its Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), formulated policy recommendations to assist the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in the conduct of the 1995 review.

In accordance with relevant recommendations of CPC, this report provides, as in previous years, updated information on the assistance provided by the organizations of the United Nations system to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations.

This report also covers the work of ACC during the year on personnel and general administrative questions and financial issues.

Finally, the report sets out the elements of the programme of work of ACC for 1996.

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* To be issued as an addendum to the present document.

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INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

1. The present report reviews the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its subsidiary machinery in 1995. It also highlights issues discussed at the Forum on the Future of the United Nations System, which was organized by the Secretary-General and held in conjunction with the first regular session of 1995 of ACC, as part of the activities for the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. In so doing, the report also endeavours to identify key issues and problems in the area of coordination within the United Nations system that require consideration at the intergovernmental level.

2. Section I outlines the action taken by ACC to enhance the support of the United Nations system to African economic recovery and development through a new System-wide Special Initiative on Africa.

3. Section II of this report describes the arrangements agreed upon by ACC to promote a concerted and coherent follow-up by the United Nations system to recent international conferences, with emphasis on supporting coordinated action at the country level. Progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development 1/ is also reviewed. In addition, the section covers the related outcome of the twenty-ninth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and ACC, which considered the theme "Coordination of the activities of the United Nations system for the eradication of poverty" as a priority emanating from international conferences. The work undertaken by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, on behalf of ACC, with regard to the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the provision of coordinated support to the Commission on Sustainable Development is also reviewed in that section.

4. Section III of the report reviews the measures adopted by ACC with a view to enhancing system-wide cooperation in the area of drug abuse control.

5. Section IV deals with the triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system, including, in particular, the work undertaken by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) in this regard.

6. Section V of the report presents updated information on the assistance provided by the United Nations system to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations.

7. Activities undertaken by ACC related to personnel and general administrative questions and financial issues are presented in section VI.

8. Lastly, the main elements envisaged for the programme of work of ACC in 1996 are discussed in section VII of the report.

B. Forum on the future of the United Nations system

9. As part of the programme of activities for the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Secretary-General organized the Forum on the Future of the United Nations System. The Forum was held in Vienna on 1 March 1995, in conjunction with the first regular session of ACC. A panel of eminent personalities, who had chaired independent commissions (the Commission on Global Governance, the South Commission and the Yale University/Ford Foundation working group) that had dealt with various aspects of reform of the United Nations, joined executive heads to discuss the challenges facing the system in the years ahead.

10. The Forum provided a valuable occasion for an informal, wide-ranging exchange of views around five interrelated themes: changing requirements for global and regional governance arising from the emerging new political and economic framework, and their implications for the United Nations system; the strengthening of linkages between the United Nations system and civil society; the financing of the United Nations system; implications of the changing role of the system for the international civil service; and the public image of the United Nations, particularly in terms of the challenge of mobilizing and focusing media attention on the economic and social work of the system.

11. It was noted that the 50 years that had passed since the signing of the Charter of the United Nations and the establishment of the current system of international organizations had been a period of fundamental and unprecedentedly rapid change. One of the most important factors of change had been technological innovation, which had revolutionized global communications and transport, led to fundamental shifts in patterns of production and resulted in a global system of production, trade and communication that could hardly have been foreseen by the founders of the United Nations.

12. While these developments had resulted in unprecedented economic growth for those who had mastered the new technologies, they had led to a growing marginalization for countries and individuals that did not have the capacity, or the opportunity to adapt. With a new consensus emerging on the broad organizing principles of society and the economy, addressing these growing economic and social inequalities was becoming one of the main challenges before the international community in general, and the United Nations system in particular. The need for the system to adapt to a fundamentally different and rapidly changing global environment did not, in any way, imply, that the relevance of the system was now in question. Meeting the global challenges facing the international community as a result of the technological revolution and the phenomenon of transnationalization, required comprehensive responses which only the United Nations system, given its universality and multidisciplinary character, was in a position to provide.

13. There was little dispute among the studies emanating from various independent commissions in the analysis of the global changes taking place and of the challenges facing the international community, including the need to redefine the sources of threats to security. They all placed the United Nations at the centre of the post-cold-war system of governance. And they all highlighted that the United Nations and its specialized agencies did not exist

as entities separate from Governments: hence, the responsibility of Member States to impart the system with new policy directions, adapted to new challenges facing it, and to show the political will necessary to provide the system with the means and resources required to accomplish the tasks assigned to it.

14. While its universal character gave the United Nations a degree of authority, legitimacy and responsibility that could not be matched by any other institution, the system was no longer the only major player in international affairs. Important regional groupings were emerging. The system should relate to these groupings in terms of burden-sharing, specialization and delegation and should provide a common platform to which all would be in a position to subscribe.

15. Reform and managerial change should be actively pursued, while remaining faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which had retained all their validity. Enhancing efficiency and avoiding duplication and inter-agency rivalries was essential in order to increase confidence in the system on the part of Governments and their people. No reform in structures would succeed unless there was such confidence; and only such confidence would ensure that the United Nations could attract the best staff and adequate resources.

16. ACC had an important role to play in promoting mutual trust, and providing the basis for an effective division of labour among the organizations of the system, including the assignment of lead-agency responsibility for policy and programme coordination in different areas to the most appropriate institution within the system.

17. Genuine reform under the financial constraints facing the system was difficult but had, nevertheless, to be vigorously pursued through new approaches, faithful to the basic principles driving the policies of organizations. Selectivity, innovation and flexibility appeared increasingly important to enable the system to preserve its competitiveness.

18. As part of the process of adapting the system to the new realities confronting it, it was becoming increasingly essential to develop new approaches to the concept of security, the established concept being no longer adequate to deal with the features of most present-day conflicts. The same considerations applied to development, which had to be viewed in a new, broader light, taking into account all its interrelated dimensions, as outlined in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Development. Creating greater awareness of the changing nature of threats to peace, which increasingly lay in poverty and economic and social ills, and reflecting such awareness in the structures and methods of work of the system, were also extremely important. Indeed, the main threat facing humanity at present was no longer war, but increasing poverty alongside growing affluence. If investments for peace-building were expanded now, expenditures for peace-keeping could be greatly reduced in the future.

19. The trend towards a progressively greater level of involvement of civil society in United Nations decision-making had been advanced at each of the recent international conferences and needed now to be institutionalized.

Linkages with civil society also needed to be further strengthened at the country level, as an important condition for translating global United Nations objectives into concrete actions that would have a real impact on the lives of peoples.

20. Discussions on financing issues were also wide-ranging. They addressed, inter alia, ways in which the United Nations system could further enhance the efficiency and impact of its operations and thus project more effectively its comparative advantages as an essential component of its resource mobilization strategies; measures to ensure full, timely and unconditional payment of assessed contributions by Member States as a key requirement for effective planning and management; the importance of ensuring that long-term development goals were not neglected and were financed adequately, while obtaining the necessary financing of emergency humanitarian needs; and ways and means of giving new impetus to ongoing intergovernmental discussions on measures for placing the voluntary funding of operational activities for development on a more stable, assured and long-term basis.

21. Discussions on the implications of the changing role of the system for the international civil service focused on the need to combine the finest traditions of public service with the best techniques of modern management. It was more important than ever, in the new circumstances, to ensure that the objectives of national, linguistic and cultural diversity, gender balance, and selection of staff on a fully competitive basis be pursued simultaneously and in a mutually reinforcing way. The new and changing demands being placed on the Organization also made it increasingly essential that levels of remuneration, conditions of service and equality of opportunity should be such as to attract staff of the highest competence. The need to guarantee security and safety of all personnel was also emphasized.

22. Finally, the need to enhance the public image of the United Nations and to correct distorted perceptions of the work of the system was emphasized, as was the importance of pooling resources and capacities to publicize achievements and to project a unified image of the system.

23. It was noted that the United Nations system was faced at present with two sets of challenges: the longer-term challenge of adapting itself to cope with the various dimensions of globalization that characterized the post-cold-war era, and the shorter-term issue of the direction of its work during the current period of transition, while the new rules to govern the post-cold-war era were being developed. These challenges had to be faced by the system together with realism but also with far-sightedness and vision.

C. Coordination issues for consideration by intergovernmental bodies

24. CPC, at its thirty-fourth session, had expressed the view that the ACC report could assist CPC in the fulfilment of its role in regard to the coordination functions of the Economic and Social Council in the context of its high-level and coordination segments, by identifying areas related to

coordination that might require the consideration of relevant intergovernmental bodies.

25. In response to this request, a number of issues are highlighted in the present report, including (a) the actions required to enhance support for African economic recovery and development; (b) the approaches needed to promote a coherent and coordinated follow-up to recent international conferences; (c) the system-wide follow-up to the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly in the context of the triennial policy review of operational activities for development; and (d) ways to maximize the effective use of the scarce human and financial resources available to the system.

26. The issue of African economic recovery and development remained a priority concern of ACC during 1995. The System-wide Special Initiative on Africa was adopted by ACC and launched on 15 March 1996.

27. An important element of the Special Initiative is a year-long campaign for political support and resource mobilization for its implementation. If the Special Initiative is to have the desired impact of helping to reverse the crisis of development in Africa, the political and financial support of the international community will be essential. The question that needs to be addressed is how consideration and action by intergovernmental bodies of all concerned organizations of the system can best be organized and coordinated so as to maximize the level of support for African development.

28. While ACC is evolving an integrated approach to the follow-up to recent international conferences (the Economic and Social Council has adopted important resolutions and decisions in this regard), a major challenge in the period ahead will be to harmonize and link up the various arrangements and efforts being undertaken at the country level with those at the inter-agency and intergovernmental levels in order to maximize impact. This implies not only that coherent policy guidance will be given by intergovernmental bodies but also that the standing subsidiary machinery of ACC and its ad hoc task forces will work in tandem and provide coherent support to country-level action as well as feed ACC with relevant information and recommendations for its thematic reviews. ACC in turn should be able to provide the Council and its subsidiary bodies with appropriate inputs for their reviews of the plans of action as well as of the common themes emerging from international conferences.

29. Another important area of action in the year ahead will be the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. This will require, among other things, the further strengthening of the resident coordinator system, including through the "lead agency" and/or "thematic groups" concepts. The closest cooperation and partnership among the various United Nations bodies and organizations, as well as with the private sector and civil society, will be critical to ensuring the most effective action at the country level. The consideration of these and related issues by the Economic and Social Council at its coordination and operational activities segments will no doubt generate further momentum towards achieving these objectives.

30. Access to an adequate level of resources continues to be a major problem facing the United Nations system. Indeed, the decreasing level of available resources has placed severe constraints on the ability of the organizations of the system to respond effectively to the growing demands for assistance. The new priorities and goals relating to sustainable development, poverty eradication, social integration, advancement and integration of women in development, and human rights and democratization, emerging from international conferences, that the system is called upon to pursue together with Governments will remain elusive without the commitment of adequate resources at both the national and international levels. As underscored in paragraph 84 of the report of the Secretary-General on coordinated follow-up to major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields (E/1995/86):

> "The ambitious and far-reaching conference agreements contrast sharply with the current environment of stagnant or shrinking resource availability, both through bilateral and multilateral channels. If the prospects for new or additional resources for the implementation of these agreements do not improve, the goals and commitments emanating from major conferences will begin to acquire the aura of an increasingly unrealistic vision."

In addition to continued efforts of ACC to enhance system-wide coordination, this issue of scarce resources will also require the close and continuing attention of intergovernmental bodies.

I. AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Background

31. Following consideration by ACC, at its second regular session of 1994, of the development situation in Africa (see document ACC/1995/23, sect. I), the Secretary-General, in February of 1995, proposed that a steering committee be established to (a) develop further practical initiatives to maximize the support provided by the United Nations system to African development and (b) raise the priority given to African development in the international agenda.

32. The Steering Committee, which was co-chaired by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), included the following organizations: the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), ECA and the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat. Five working groups were formed under the Steering Committee on the issues of water (under the chairmanship of UNEP), food security (under the chairmanship of FAO), governance (under the chairmanship of UNDP), social and human development (under the chairmanship of UNESCO) and resource mobilization (under the chairmanship of the World Bank).

The work of these five working groups culminated in a report of the Steering Committee to ACC.

B. Consideration by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC)

33. ACC, at its second regular session of 1995, following consideration of the report submitted to it by the Steering Committee, decided to launch a United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa early in 1996. Executive heads confirmed their intention to bring the Special Initiative to the attention of their respective governing bodies, and to actively contribute to a campaign to mobilize political commitment and support, so as to ensure the effective implementation of the Special Initiative.

34. ACC noted that the Special Initiative, as set out in the report of the Steering Committee, was built around two elements: first, a set of specific development actions, to be undertaken jointly by the organizations of the system, within the context of their ongoing programmes and in close cooperation with other development actors, including regional organizations, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector; second, a year-long campaign, to be initiated in early 1996, for political and resource mobilization.

35. ACC members expressed appreciation for the important work undertaken by the Steering Committee. The view was expressed that the Initiative, to have the desired results, should comprise programmes in priority areas, where the system had a clear comparative advantage, and where cooperative action could lead to greater effectiveness and impact. Such programmes should be an integral part of the contribution of the system to the implementation of plans of action adopted by the respective legislative bodies, and should be fully integrated into the work programmes of the concerned organizations. They should be carried out in cooperation with African Governments and civil society, and in close consultation with concerned regional and subregional organizations. They should also be based on a realistic assessment of the human and financial resources that they required, and of the system's capacity to mobilize those resources. They should be focused on country-level action, where the resident coordinator system should play a central coordinating role. Above all, programmes under the Special Initiative should support policies and programmes decided on by the African countries themselves, and should be pursued as an integral part of a major effort by the system as a whole to generate greater political commitment for African development by the entire international community.

36. Critical aspects of the African situation cited during the discussions as requiring greater emphasis as part of the Special Initiative included food security, water, desertification, land degradation and soil improvement. Other areas referred to as requiring attention included the maintenance of sound economic policies currently in place, the strengthening of the agricultural and industrial sectors, investment and commodity diversification, debt relief, trade, transport and communications, and access to technology. Cutting across all these sectors, the importance of giving special attention to the key role and contribution of women to African development was strongly emphasized. An

additional proposal relating to water and sanitation was circulated during the meeting and generally supported. The need to ensure that humanitarian emergency requirements were met as a matter of priority was also emphasized: development activities should consolidate solutions to humanitarian crises and prevent them from recurring, and the essential requirements of humanitarian assistance must be addressed with sustainable development in perspective. It was stressed that the effective allocation and utilization of available resources by the organizations of the system, and the mobilization of additional resources, would be critical to the success of the Special Initiative. The willingness of the World Bank to play a leading role in resource mobilization was especially welcomed.

37. ACC subsequently adopted the following Declaration as part of the launching of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa:

> "The Special Initiative on Africa being launched today by the Secretary-General, with the executive heads of all the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system represented in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), reflects the priority accorded to Africa's development by the international community, the mandates emanating from the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and major United Nations conferences, and the undertakings made individually and collectively by African Governments to accelerate the development of their countries. It is a concrete expression of the commitment of all organizations of the system to enhance substantially their support for the development efforts of African countries.
>
> "The Initiative consists of a set of major programmes that address established priorities for development. It will be backed by a year-long effort, to be undertaken by all organizations of the United Nations system, to mobilize worldwide political commitment and support for Africa's development. The aim is to develop practical actions that can serve to maximize the support provided by the United Nations system to African development, and help ensure that Africa is given the attention and place it deserves in the international agenda.
>
> "The economic, human development and environmental challenges facing Africa continue to be of unparalleled severity, in spite of the sustained efforts of African Governments and civil society, and the assistance of the international donor community. At the same time, prospects for Africa's development are, in many ways, better now than they have been for many years. To realize these prospects will require renewed determination, within Africa as well as by the international community, to meet priority development needs. It will require innovation, renewed dedication, strong solidarity, and urgent and concerted action.
>
> "This Special Initiative aims to contribute to this effort through a number of concrete actions in four thematic areas of fundamental importance to Africa's future. It is an expression of renewed strong commitment by the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to Africa's development. The actions and themes it embodies all respond to specific

priorities identified by African Governments and the international community."

38. With regard to arrangements for following up and monitoring the Special Initiative, the mandate of the Steering Committee has been extended for a period of one year. The work of the Steering Committee will be pursued with the full participation of all interested organizations.

39. ACC also invited the Steering Committee to work closely with the relevant parts of the ACC machinery, as well as with the inter-agency task forces set up for the coordinated follow-up to recent international conferences.

40. ACC invited the Steering Committee to submit a progress report to ACC at its first regular session of 1996.

II. COORDINATED FOLLOW-UP TO RECENT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

A. Background

41. ACC, in the context of its consideration at its first regular session of 1995, of the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development, emphasized the need to approach the follow-up to all recent United Nations conferences in an integrated manner. It stressed that the development of a coordinated response by the United Nations system to the cross-cutting and interrelated recommendations emanating from these conferences was essential in order to assist countries in the integrated implementation and effective monitoring of the programmes of action adopted by the conferences. Subsequently, the Secretary-General wrote to executive heads on the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and again stressed the importance of pursuing such follow-up in the larger context of the conference "continuum".

42. The Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, also considered, on the basis of a report submitted by the Secretary-General (E/1995/86), the coordinated follow-up to major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields, including the World Summit for Social Development; the World Summit for Children; the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), from which emanated the Cartagena Commitment; 2/ the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; the World Conference on Human Rights; and the International Conference on Population and Development. In section II of its agreed conclusions 1995/1, on coordinated follow-up by the United Nations system and implementation of the results of the major international conferences organized by the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields (see document A/50/3, chap. III, para. 22), the Council, in addressing inter-agency coordination at all levels, emphasized that:

> "Measures should be taken to further strengthen the role of ACC and its standing committees and ensure the systematic exchange of information and a rational division of labour between its standing committees, as well as between established ACC machinery and ad hoc mechanisms set up in the context of the follow-up to individual conferences."

The Council invited ACC "to bring system-wide coordination issues to the attention of the Council and to make recommendations thereon". While recognizing that, "at the country level, the national Government has the primary responsibility for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, follow-up activities of conferences", the Council noted the following:

> "The follow-up of activities that are relevant to the mandates of operational activities for development of the United Nations should, through the resident coordinator system, take into account common themes and goals and should be within the framework of national plans and strategies and the country strategy note, where they exist or are in preparation. In line with General Assembly resolution 47/199, the resident coordinator, in consultation with the government and in the light of national priorities, could utilize thematic groups composed of the agencies concerned, with a designated lead agency or task manager under his or her overall leadership, to serve as the coordination mechanism with the responsibility of developing integrated approaches for the realization of common goals, including, where appropriate, the development of a common data system at the national level to facilitate reviewing and reporting on the progress achieved."

43. In a subsequent communication to executive heads, the Secretary-General reiterated that strong inter-agency coordination would be required at all levels in order to promote effective and integrated follow-up to the commitments and plans of action emanating from recent global conferences. He noted, however, that it was in relation to national-level action - in assisting individual countries to translate the outcome of these conferences into concrete national policies and programmes, and in providing resident coordinators and country-level teams with coherent system-wide support - that existing inter-agency efforts needed to be especially reinforced. To the extent that follow-up mechanisms for the Rio Conference were already in place, the Secretary-General proposed the identification of a number of priority themes and related mechanisms aimed at supporting an integrated follow-up at the country level to the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

B. A coordinated response by the United Nations system

44. The conclusions reached by ACC at its second regular session encompass the basic elements of a coordinated response by the United Nations system to recent international conferences. It was agreed that monitoring the follow-up by the United Nations system of recent international conferences would continue to be an important concern of ACC. In order to promote an integrated follow-up to these conferences, ACC decided that, in the future, it would undertake such reviews on the basis of a thematic approach, bringing together related results of recent international conferences, and drawing for this purpose on relevant inter-agency mechanisms supporting ACC in different sectoral and cross-sectoral areas. The selection of the themes for such reviews would take into account the need to monitor progress in the implementation of conference results and to provide the Economic and Social Council, particularly its coordination segment,

with consolidated information, analyses and assessment of system-wide activities in support of the Council's own thematic reviews.

45. ACC agreed that coordinated support for country-level action should be organized, in the first instance, around three interrelated themes: (a) the enabling environment for social and economic development, (b) employment and sustainable livelihoods and (c) basic social services for all. It considered that these themes were especially relevant in bringing about a concerted attack on poverty which constituted an overarching priority objective emanating from these conferences.

46. ACC agreed on a number of arrangements for pursuing these themes. It was agreed that the existing Inter-Agency Task Force on the International Conference on Population and Development, under the chairmanship of the Executive Director of UNFPA, would be expanded in order to focus more broadly on social services for all, and that a task force to address the subject of the enabling environment for social and economic development and another task force on employment and sustainable livelihoods would be established. The World Bank agreed to serve as lead agency for the Task Force on the enabling environment for social and economic development and ILO for the Task Force on employment and sustainable livelihoods.

47. It was further agreed that the lead agencies would consult members of ACC on the definition of the work of, and participation in, these task forces and on the contribution that different organizations, from their varying perspectives, could make to their work. ACC also agreed on some common assumptions and guidelines on the operation of these mechanisms, namely, that they should be time-bound; called upon to develop, at the outset of their work, a clear definition of the tasks to be accomplished; and discontinued when such tasks had been completed. They should operate within the framework of ACC and, without duplicating the work of the standing machinery, interact closely with that machinery. The introduction of these mechanisms should not result in an increase in the total number of inter-agency meetings and in the cost of the coordination machinery.

48. In connection with the Fourth World Conference on Women, ACC, noting that the Platform for Action 3/ adopted by the Conference encompassed, yet went well beyond, the above themes, agreed that all thematic task forces should be engaged in furthering its effective implementation. It was further agreed that, following the relevant resolutions and decisions by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, consideration would need to be given to the best means of promoting sustained and coordinated follow-up to the Platform for Action, and of ensuring that the improvement of the status of women in all its aspects was placed within the mainstream of the work of the system.

49. With regard to regional-level arrangements, ACC noted that the executive secretaries of the regional commissions, in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP, would work with the concerned agencies and programmes to develop concerted action programmes at the regional level in support of conference objectives.

50. At the country level, resident coordinators, in close cooperation with United Nations system partners, would take the lead in supporting the establishment of thematic groups that would draw on, but would not necessarily be identical with, the inter-agency task forces referred to above, reflecting the particular country situation, priorities and needs. These groups would fully involve national and local authorities and non-governmental organizations, and work with all concerned agencies and programmes, including those not having field representation.

C. Follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development

51. ACC recognized the importance of shared responsibility within the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the need for coordinated action, particularly at the country level. It noted that the follow-up to the Conference was being organized in a very inclusive manner, involving all concerned organizations of the system as well as regional organizations and a large number of non-governmental organizations. It will be recalled in this connection, that an Inter-Agency Task Force had first been organized towards the end of 1994 with the objectives of developing a common framework for the follow-up to the Conference and coordinating (particularly through the resident coordinator system and country strategy notes where they existed or were in preparation) and monitoring the progress being made by the system in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

52. The Inter-Agency Task Force on the International Conference on Population and Development developed a common advocacy statement which was subsequently endorsed by ACC. The Inter-Agency Task Force also completed guidelines to assist the resident coordinator system in the operationalization of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in the following four areas: (a) a common approach to national capacity-building in tracking child and maternal mortality, (b) women's empowerment, (c) basic education with special attention to gender disparities and (d) reproductive health.

53. This Inter-Agency Task Force, as noted above, has now been expanded to encompass the broader issue of social services for all. Thus, further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development will be further pursued in the broader context of the follow-up to other recent global conferences.

D. Outcome of the twenty-ninth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and ACC

54. The twenty-ninth series of Joint Meetings of the CPC and ACC discussed the issue of "Coordination of the activities of the United Nations system for the eradication of poverty", a priority theme emanating from all of the international conferences. The meeting focused its attention on the promotion

of system-wide coordination in efforts to eradicate poverty. It was stressed that a proper division of labour among the organizations of the United Nations system was crucial for maximizing coordination in the fight against poverty. Members of ACC outlined their activities and the mechanisms put in place for coordination in the area of poverty, particularly as a follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development.

55. The Chairman's summary (see document E/1996/4 and Corr.1, para. 10) identified the following broad conclusions to be drawn:

"The eradication of poverty has emerged as a top priority in the work of the United Nations system. This priority must be pursued in the coordinated follow-up to global conferences, in particular the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development. Efforts to eradicate poverty should be based on individual countries' goals and plans. Therefore, the success of the coordination efforts of the United Nations system must be measured at the country level. The need for a supportive international environment to meet the challenge of eradicating poverty should be fully taken into account. There is a need to identify and assess practical measures for enhancing coordination within the United Nations system. It is also important to mobilize adequate resources and use them effectively and efficiently;

"It has been noted that ACC, at its second regular session of 1995 (12 and 13 October 1995), established three inter-agency task forces on subjects that are closely related to the eradication of poverty to follow up the cross-cutting themes of recent global conferences;

"The Joint Meetings have noted that consideration is also being given to the establishment of an inter-agency task force oriented towards the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women. A final decision will be taken following the consideration of that outcome by the General Assembly;

"It has been stressed by CPC and ACC members alike that effective coordination needs to be pursued and assessed at the country level in terms of its impact on the poor;

"The efforts of the United Nations system need to be integrated with those of Governments and non-governmental organizations at the community and national levels. The resident coordinator has a key role to play at the field level in the integrated follow-up to conferences, by organizing thematic working groups and ensuring that task forces and specific programmes are field-driven;

"It has been agreed that close linkages should be established between the multisectoral strategies being pursued by various organizations, and that the instruments of coordination available at the country level should be used to the fullest extent to enhance the effectiveness and impact of anti-poverty programmes."

E. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

56. During 1995, ACC, through its Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, continued to coordinate system-wide efforts in the implementation of Agenda 21, 4/ particularly through an effective decentralized system of task managers. In this regard, it should be noted that a number of joint inter-agency initiatives have been launched in such areas as climate change, chemical safety, technology, water, the sustainable development of small island developing States, information exchange and sustainable development indicators. The need for additional resources to finance these initiatives remains a critical concern.

57. The Committee has also been engaged in formulating and developing specific proposals for joint programmes within the framework of Agenda 21. These include the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)/UNEP National Cleaner Production Centres Programme, which is being introduced in a number of developing countries; the World Climate Programme led by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), UNEP, UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), FAO and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU); an interorganizational programme on the sound management of chemicals in which ILO, FAO, WHO, UNEP, UNIDO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) participate; and the Global Water Assessment task force.

58. Emphasis has also been placed on the formulation of sustainable development strategies at the national level in support of country-driven processes, which are designed to p ovide direction to the assistance provided by the United Nations system to Governments in support of national goals and priorities.

59. The streamlining of reporting requirements is another important issue that ACC continued to pursue in 1995. While the issue was under the active consideration of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, ACC welcomed initiatives aimed at (a) the streamlining of reporting by Governments to the United Nations system, including reporting in relation to conventions and treaties and (b) the streamlining of reports to the various governing bodies related to the implementation of Agenda 21 or to sustainable development issues in general.

60. In this connection, the Commission on Sustainable Development could play an important role, including in the streamlining of its own reporting requirements, as the current arrangements seem to overstretch the capacities of both Governments and the United Nations system, and carry the risk of duplication. An integrated approach at the national level, driven by national priorities, could conceivably be a starting-point in this regard.

61. With respect to the functioning of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development itself, in accordance with the decision of ACC, adopted at its first regular session of 1994 (see document ACC/1994/10, para. 30, decision 3), the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development is undertaking a three-phased review of its functioning, which is expected to lead to a full assessment of the United Nations response to Agenda 21, in time for

the special session of the General Assembly to be held in 1997 to review the implementation of Agenda 21. The first phase of the review was carried out in 1994 and the second in 1995.

62. In the second phase, the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, at its sixth meeting, undertook an assessment of its role and functioning in the light of existing and proposed inter-agency mechanisms dealing with issues relevant to sustainable development. At its second regular session of 1995, ACC adopted a note on the review of the functioning of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (see document ACC/1995/23, annex), submitted to it by the Committee.

63. The review concluded that there was a broad agreement that the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and its system of task managers provided an effective and flexible mechanism for system-wide coordination and promotion of inter-agency partnerships, cooperation and coordination in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in implementation of Agenda 21 and in sustainable development work in general. The work of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and its task managers had received support both from ACC and from Governments particularly during the second and third sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development and at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. In particular, as had been demonstrated during the third session of the Commission, Member States particularly appreciated the fact that the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the work of the Commission enjoyed strong support from the entire family of United Nations organizations in a coordinated and collaborative way.

64. It was also recognized that the task manager mechanism would need to be strengthened and that the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development should focus more on policy issues such as the promotion of policy advice, strategy development and the promotion of joint programming of Agenda 21 activities for implementation at the country level. In this connection, it was also important for the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development to seek to achieve a better balance in its work in support of ACC and the promotion of United Nations system-wide partnership in the implementation of Agenda 21, as well as in support of the Commission on Sustainable Development and related intergovernmental processes. In this regard, it was recommended that the first regular meeting of the year of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development should be largely devoted to matters related to the support of ACC and the coordination of sustainable development activities in the United Nations system, while its second meeting should focus on the assessment of the outcome of the Commission on Sustainable Development and other related intergovernmental processes and on the required follow-up action by the United Nations system.

65. Given the broad and complex set of issues that the concept of sustainable development encompassed, as well as the wide range of cooperative arrangements among several United Nations system bodies on specific aspects of sustainable development, it was felt that the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development should provide an umbrella framework for ensuring policy coherence in a United Nations system-wide approach to sustainable development by identifying overall policy issues, major gaps and constraints, and by

formulating recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system in sustainable development, as envisaged by ACC. It should thus address specific developmental, social or environmental components, thus avoiding duplication of the functions of other existing mechanisms for inter-agency coordination that also fit under the overall concept of sustainable development.

66. It was further recognized that the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development should carry out an assessment of existing and proposed United Nations system coordinating mechanisms related to social, environmental and developmental objectives, at the inter-agency, intergovernmental and national levels, with a view to clarifying the Committee's role and priorities in support of the overall ACC responsibility for coordination, which would also provide an input into the review of the implementation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development commitments by the General Assembly in 1997.

III. INTERNATIONAL DRUG ABUSE CONTROL

67. ACC, at its first regular session of 1995, examined ways and means of strengthening the coordination and effectiveness of system-wide activities in the area of international drug abuse control, on the basis of recommendations submitted by CCPOQ, in collaboration with the ACC Subcommittee on Drug Control.

68. ACC noted the mutually interactive impact of drug abuse and socio-economic development. In particular, the direct linkages between drug abuse and health and social issues, such as human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), street children, the family, the status of women, education including that of adolescents, and the livelihood of small farmers, were stressed. The economic problems, such as money laundering, connected with illicit traffic in drugs were noted, as were the problems of governance related to corruption and illegal activities involved in drug trafficking. The interactions between drug abuse and poverty and the impact on the environment of the illicit cultivation and processing of drug-related crops were likewise stressed.

69. ACC expressed strong support for concerted action by the United Nations system in the area of drug abuse control and agreed on the following (see document ACC/1995/4, para. 6):

> "Steps should be taken by organizations to identify, on a systematic basis, aspects of their respective programmes with potential major implications for drug abuse control issues, in order to ensure that these implications are taken fully into account in programme elaboration and implementation. In addition, international financial institutions should be urged to strengthen their support to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and to other concerned organizations and affected countries. The regional commissions should be invited to make issues related to drug control a central part of their concerns.
>
> "Ways should be found to ensure more coherent action and synergy within the United Nations system in dealing with drug abuse control.

UNDCP, in line with its mandate, should lead and coordinate activities and offer its expertise and other support in this area. At the same time, other organizations should bring their own expertise fully to bear in countering problems relating to drug abuse.

"To these ends:

"Concerned organizations should consult regularly at the global, regional and field levels. At the country level, resident coordinators should be invited to create informal inter-agency groups, especially in countries where UNDCP has activities, to ensure that drug abuse control needs are assigned the necessary priority and addressed in a coordinated manner, particularly in the preparation of country strategy notes.

"The ACC Subcommittee on Drug Control should act to review, strengthen and render operational the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (SWAP) through the elaboration of specific multi-agency sectoral and/or subsectoral plans of action for drug abuse control at global, regional and subregional levels. Each of these joint plans of action should bring together those agencies whose own work touches on the particular issues concerned.

"At the same time, the plans of action should form the basis for the coordinated or joint fund-raising efforts that will be required to implement the plans.

"Taken together, the plans of action should constitute a truly multisectoral and system-wide approach to the drug abuse problem, as requested by Member States, and should permit the system to do its part in implementing the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly on 23 February 1990 (Assembly resolution S-17/2), at its seventeenth special session."

IV. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

70. ACC, through its CCPOQ, continued to give priority attention to the enhancement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, with specific reference to General Assembly resolutions 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and 44/211 of 22 December 1989, as well as to the relevant resolutions and decisions arising from the annual reviews of the Economic and Social Council.

A. Triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system

71. CCPOQ collaborated actively in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/50/202-E/1995/76 and Add.1-3). The member organizations of CCPOQ assisted in the drafting of the questionnaires sent to Governments, organizations of the United Nations system

and resident coordinators; participated in a number of country missions; met in special session in May 1995 to review the draft of the analysis of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 in the form of an interim status report (E/1995/98, annex); and reconvened in July 1995 to discuss the recommendations to be submitted to the Assembly.

72. The extensive consultative process ensured an effective and consensual coverage of the different issues and views, and facilitated the identification of areas for greater coordination and action by the United Nations development system such as the resident coordinator system, the programme approach, training, the use of new information technologies for communication and management, the review of the common understanding of national execution, and joint efforts in monitoring and evaluation.

73. The report of the Secretary-General (A/50/202-E/1995/76 and Add.1-3) submitted on the basis of these consultations and welcomed by Member States, provided the framework for the comprehensive policy review of operational activities at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly leading to the adoption of Assembly resolution 50/120.

1. Resident coordinator system

74. In 1995, CCPOQ adopted on behalf of ACC an updated and consolidated statement on the role and functioning of the resident coordinator system (ACC/1995/1, annex I). Taking into account the principles on coordination in the field adopted by ACC in 1961, 1967, 1979 and 1989-1990, and reflecting the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/199, the statement dealt with various provisions aimed at strengthening the resident coordinator system, including more effective support to recipient countries, the mobilization of field-level committees and thematic groups, the ensuring of appropriate follow-up to global agendas in accordance with established mandates and in response to national plans and priorities, and providing of assistance to Governments in the development and implementation of country strategy notes.

75. The CCPOQ Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System addressed such issues as participation in the system of non-field represented organizations, financial support facilities for coordination of activities of the system, the nature and structure of the annual reports of resident coordinators, institutional responsibilities for communication with the resident coordinator system, and collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions.

2. Programme approach

76. In 1995, CCPOQ adopted guiding principles for a monitoring and evaluation methodology in the context of the programme approach (ACC/1995/1, annex II), as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/199. Subsequently, CCPOQ decided to convene an inter-agency workshop to review the interpretation of the programme approach on the basis of the experience gained in the implementation of the concept and to develop operational guidelines for the application of the monitoring and evaluation methodology. The inter-agency workshop, consisting of

both headquarters and field representatives, developed: (a) an updated and revised common framework for the programme approach, (b) monitoring and evaluation operational guidance and (c) draft training modules for the programme approach.

3. Training in operational activities

77. CCPOQ, assisted by its Advisory Panel on Operational Activities Training, continued to develop and implement the training programme for development activities. The management of field coordination training programmes conducted by the ILO International Training Centre at Turin has been further strengthened. Three workshops for senior United Nations system field representatives were organized in 1995, including one, the first in the region, held in Cartagena, Colombia, in November 1995. In-country pre-workshops have also been conducted with the active participation of the country teams. Similar workshops will continue to be organized to ensure the full participation of all member organizations of a country team.

78. In-country follow-up workshops involving national officials have proved somewhat more difficult to organize. To enhance effectiveness and in accordance with experience, greater priority will be attached to in-country workshops. Future workshops will be conducted on the basis of a specific theme, such as the preparation of a country strategy note.

79. The component of the programme to strengthen national capacity has continued to be developed. Three "training of trainers" workshops were organized in 1995, including the first one for French-speaking country teams. Over 60 trainers drawn from national training institutions, government offices and United Nations system national staff in 16 countries participated in the programme, which targeted the training of trainers in programme/project formulation and management. Bilateral and United Nations system support for a second phase of the programme will include specialized in-country workshops.

B. Resource flows and trends for operational activities

80. In 1995, CCPOQ undertook a review of its Task Force on Support Costs. CCPOQ approved the continuation of the Task Force under the new title of Task Force on Financing Modalities for Operational Activities in order to reflect the broadened mandate of the Task Force on general financing and resource flow issues (see document ACC/1995/18, para. 68). CCPOQ also approved new terms of reference for the Task Force. The Committee agreed that the Task Force would work, in a focused manner, on a few specific issues at a time. The Task Force would be involved in the preparation of recommendations to CCPOQ on cross-organizational issues, inter alia, the development of harmonized support cost reimbursement concepts and systems; the development and use of results of common costs analysis and measurement; and the integration of newly established global funds into the system-wide funding structure of operational activities. Some additional issues suggested for examination by the Task Force included the recovery of overheads on extrabudgetary programmes, and modalities of dealing

with exchange rate fluctuations and with non-convertible currencies in extrabudgetary contributions.

V. ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES INVOKING ARTICLE 50 OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS

81. CPC, in paragraph 285 of its report on the work of its thirty-fifth session (A/50/16), "stressed the importance of continued attention of the Secretary-General, including in his capacity as Chairman of ACC, to efforts of assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Committee requested that the ACC overview report should continue to provide detailed information on assistance by the United Nations system to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter". The countries concerned are those affected by the sanctions imposed by the Security Council against Iraq and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

82. Detailed information on the efforts made by the United Nations system to provide assistance to the 21 affected States that had invoked Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations in connection with the implementation of Security Council resolution 661 (1990) on sanctions against Iraq was first contained in the report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to the note by the President of the Security Council (S/25036) regarding the question of special economic problems of States as a result of sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations (A/48/573-S/26705). The annual overview reports of ACC for the years 1992 (E/1993/81), 1993 (E/1994/19) and 1994 (E/1995/21) also reviewed the relevant assistance activities and provided the necessary updates in that regard.

83. In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf crisis, emergency operations and special assistance projects on behalf of the 21 affected countries were largely completed by 1993. However, adjustment efforts of those countries increased in the following years. At the same time, the ongoing activities of the relevant entities of the United Nations system continued to take into account the special economic problems of the affected countries and the long-term effects of the Persian Gulf crisis on their economies.

84. The annual overview reports of ACC for 1993 and 1994 also reviewed the activities of assistance of the United Nations system with regard to eight States adversely affected by the implementation of sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). More detailed information on the response of the United Nations system, with particular reference to the relevant actions taken by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), UNDP, UNCTAD and ECE, was provided in two reports of the Secretary-General on economic assistance to States affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (A/49/356 and A/50/423).

85. In its resolution 50/58 E of 12 December 1995, the General Assembly, inter alia, renewed its invitation to the international financial institutions, in particular the IMF, the International Bank for Reconstruction and

Development, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to continue to pay special attention to the economic problems of the affected States and their adverse social impact and to consider ways and means for mobilizing and providing resources on appropriate terms for mitigating the continuing negative impact of the sanctions on the efforts of the affected States for financial stabilization as well as for development of regional transport and communications infrastructure. In the same resolution, the Assembly also renewed its request to the competent organs, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to take into consideration, in programming their development activities, the special needs of the affected States and to consider providing assistance to them from their special programme resources; urged the organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system rendering humanitarian assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), including material and food supply for the United Nations Protection Force and other United Nations peace-keeping contingents, to take appropriate steps to broaden access for suppliers, particularly from the States affected by the implementation of the Security Council mandatory sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); requested the Secretary-General to take all appropriate measures to increase the opportunity for countries affected by the sanctions to participate actively in the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of the crisis-stricken areas of former Yugoslavia after the achievement of a peaceful, lasting and just political solution to the conflict in the Balkans; and also requested the Secretary-General to continue to seek on a regular basis information from States and regional organizations and the concerned organs and agencies of the United Nations system on action taken to alleviate the special economic problems of these States and to report thereon to the Security Council, as well as to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-first session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

86. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/58 E, the Secretary-General will submit to the Assembly at its fifty-first session a further report containing information received from the relevant components of the United Nations system.

87. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in paragraph 4 (a) of its resolution 49/58 of 9 December 1994, the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, at its 1995 session held from 27 February to 10 March 1995, considered the question of the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter. The Special Committee, after considering proposals on this question, recalled the invitation of the Assembly to the Secretary-General, contained in paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 49/58, to submit a report on the question referred to above, analysing the proposals and suggestions on that issue contained in the report of the Committee on its 1994 session. The Committee also considered that the Secretary-General might usefully take into account, in preparing the requested report, the suggestions and proposals contained in the report of the Special Committee on its 1995 session, and invited the Assembly to consider the establishment of an open-ended working group, with a view to considering the subject-matter in question, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General. 5/

88.. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter (A//50//360) reviewed the proposals and suggestions of the Special Committee and analysed the reaction that those proposals and suggestions had elicited in the Special Committee.. The report also suggested possible practical ways to implement those proposals and suggestions,, should States decide to adopt them..

89.. Pursuant to the invitation of the Special Committee,, the Sixth Committee,, at its second meeting,, on 25 September 1995,, established an open-ended working group on the implementation of Charter provisions related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions.. Further to the work of the Working Group,, and on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee ((see document A,//50//642 and Corr..1)),, the General Assembly adopted resolution 50//51,, entitled "Implementation of Charter provisions related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions",, on 11 December 1995..

90.. In that resolution,, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the Security Council and its sanctions committees were able to carry out their work expeditiously,, and to make appropriate arrangements in the relevant parts of the Secretariat,, in order to carry out,, in a coordinated way,, related functions.. These functions deal with,, inter alia,, the provision of advice to the Security Council and its organs,, at their request,, on specific needs or problems of those third States that are or may be especially affected by the implementation of sanctions,, and present possible options so that,, while maintaining the effectiveness of the sanctions regimes,, appropriate adjustments may be made to the administration of the regime or the regime itself with a view to mitigating the adverse effects on such States.. The Assembly,, in the same resolution,, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly,, at its fifty-first session,, on the implementation of the functions indicated in the resolution and to include in his report possible guidelines that might be adopted on technical procedures to be used by the appropriate parts of the Secretariat,, including for providing better information and early assessments for the Security Council and its organs about the actual or potential effects of sanctions on third States that invoked Article 50 of the Charter..

91.. The Secretary-General will be undertaking the preparation of this report during 1996,, and should be in a position to provide information on further developments in the next annual overview report of ACC..

VI.. ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

92.. With regard to administrative questions,, ACC focused its attention in 1995 on the consultative process and functioning of the International Civil Service Commission ((ICSC)),, and the status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system..

A. The consultative process and functioning of the International Civil Service Commission

33. At the second regular session of 1995, ACC members expressed their concern about the state of the consultative process. A serious crisis of confidence had developed through the perception both of the organizations of the system and of the staff associations that ICSC had not responded adequately to its mandates. ACC was of the view that the limited measures taken by ICSC had not been sufficient to restore an active and full consultative process.

34. ACC also expressed the view that a key element of the reform required involved the need to select members with the requisite technical skills and broad managerial capabilities to enable ICSC to keep pace with global trends in human resources management and the changing needs of the organizations of the common system. In an effort to improve the consultative process, ACC discussed a proposal that centred on the consultative process of ICSC and on a reform of the appointment procedures of members of the Commission in order to better reflect the totality of the common system. As a consequence, ACC thus proposed to the General Assembly that three of the fifteen members of ICSC be appointed by the Assembly from a list of at least six candidates proposed by ACC, and two from a list of at least four candidates put forward by the staff bodies. ACC also proposed to develop a formula which would provide for better representation of the governing bodies of the organizations of the common system in the overall membership of ICSC (see document ACC/1995/23, para. 35).

35. ACC also urged the General Assembly to put in place a tripartite search mechanism that would enable the consultative partners to engage in a collaborative effort to identify and screen candidates for ICSC.

36. ACC further proposed (a) that the terms of appointment of Commission members be limited to two terms of four years and (b) that targets be set for improving gender balance among members of the Commission.

B. Personnel and general administrative questions

37. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) (CCAQ(PER))) drew the attention of ACC to several key issues, in particular the examination of the application of the Noblemaire principle; the status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system; the framework for a supportive work/family agenda; and the security and safety of United Nations system staff and associated personnel.

1. Application of the Noblemaire principle

38. ACC reviewed the report submitted by ICSC to the General Assembly, in accordance with Assembly resolution 47/216 of 23 December 1992, in which the Assembly requested (sect. II.C) ICSC to study, inter alia, all aspects of the application of the Noblemaire principle with a view to ensuring the competitiveness of the United Nations common system.

99. ACC, recognizing the worsening situation of scarce financial resources, mixed with increasing demands, and conscious of the need for improved performance management and enhanced cost-effectiveness, expressed its commitment to achieving increased productivity. In this regard, members recalled the concerns the Committee had repeatedly expressed about the critical need to restore competitive conditions of service so as to enable the organizations of the system to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre.

100. In this regard, ACC welcomed the salary measures proposed by ICSC, and decided to request that the General Assembly, inter alia, adopt the recommendations of the Commission with regard to increasing remuneration levels and restructuring the Professional level salary scale; and instruct ICSC, as part of a longer-term strategy of restoring competitivity, to reflect more accurately the current realities of the global labour market in compensation/salary proposals.

2. Status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system

101. In introducing this item into the first regular session of ACC of 1995, the Secretary-General noted that the data before ACC indicated clearly that the improvement of the status of women in the secretariats of United Nations organizations was a system-wide concern.

102. ACC members expressed their commitment to the advancement of women as a policy priority. In reviewing developments in their respective organizations, they noted that the key requirements to effect change included determined managerial commitment and action at the highest level; a clear strategy, including specific, short-term targets; emphasis on effective monitoring and accountability of managers; appropriate training; measures to encourage the mobility of women staff; and the creation of a supportive working environment conducive to equal participation of men and women in the work of the organizations.

103. While certain constraints were identified, including the role of Governments in submitting candidatures; downsizing of organizations; the need to reconcile competing policy priorities, particularly equitable geographical distribution; the paucity of women candidates in certain technical fields; and the lack of employment possibilities for spouses, it was agreed that determined efforts should be made to advance the status of women at all levels and, in particular, to increase the number of women in managerial positions.

104. The importance of urging Governments systematically to give priority to the submission of women candidates was stressed. It was noted that experience had shown that it was possible to recruit women in a wide range of disciplines. There was agreement on the need to take measures to encourage inter-agency mobility of women staff, to facilitate employment of spouses, and to increase the flexibility of the system in dealing with work/family issues. It was considered critically important to increase the number of women staff in the field, where the majority of beneficiaries were women.

105. It was agreed that ACC would keep the matter under consideration, and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) was requested to report to ACC on implementation at regular intervals.

106. ACC adopted the following statement, which was transmitted to the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as to the General Assembly and other governing bodies of the organizations of the system:

"ACC statement on the status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system

"The members of ACC reaffirm their strong commitment to ensuring that the advancement of women is a policy priority within the organizations of the common system and to taking necessary measures to improve the status of women in their respective secretariats. Key to the achievement of gender equality goals is management commitment at the highest levels.

"ACC is conscious that progress to date has, with some exceptions, been limited. While the overall proportion of women has increased in most organizations, the number of women in senior and policy-making positions remains low. A concerted effort needs to be made to implement existing policies fully, as well as to develop new initiatives to increase the participation of women at senior levels.

"In the development of action plans, in the context of the overall human resources management strategies of the organizations of the system, emphasis will be placed on clear, specific, short-term targets, preferably at the level of organizational units. Efforts will be made to increase the flexibility with which the system deals with women candidates, to remove obstacles to their recruitment, retention, promotion and mobility, and to create a supportive environment. In addition to developing specific policies and monitoring mechanisms, executive heads intend to hold senior managers accountable for the implementation of these policies at the level at which the targets are set.

"In light of the above, consideration will be given by members of ACC to the following to facilitate the recruitment of women:

"(a) The feasibility of treating all women staff members of common-system organizations as internal candidates in applying for vacant posts in any organization of the system;

"(b) Requesting organizations to utilize their field presence to prospect for women candidates in all disciplines;

"(c) In cases where Member States are to submit candidatures, urging Governments to submit at least one or more qualified female candidates for each position.

"In order to encourage the mobility of women, consideration will be given to:

"(a) Developing a system for inter-agency mobility of women staff to increase their experience;

"(b) Facilitating the employment of spouses through amending the organizations' staff rules, where necessary;

"(c) Encouraging the further development of employment opportunities for spouses, encompassing not only the common system and other governmental and intergovernmental organizations, but also, to the extent possible, the non-governmental and multinational sectors, as well as introducing relevant provisions in host country agreements and organizing efforts in each United Nations location to promote employment of spouses, led in the field by resident coordinators and in each headquarters city by a lead agency.

"With respect to the promotion of a supportive work environment and to the fostering of the necessary attitudinal changes, organizations will consider the introduction of measures that will lead to a climate conducive to the equal participation of men and women in the work of the organizations. Such measures will be related inter alia to the work/family issues currently under review, such as flexible working hours, part-time work, job-sharing schemes, child care and special leave arrangements.

"In addition, those organizations that have not already done so are encouraged to introduce appropriate policies and procedures to combat sexual harassment.

"While the focus of these measures remains the advancement of women at all levels, ACC is conscious that particular attention must be paid to increasing the number of women in senior managerial positions."

3. Work/family agenda policy

107. Linked to its consideration of the status of women, ACC paid particular attention to the introduction of measures that would create and maintain a more family-supportive work environment. To this end, ACC adopted a policy framework for a supportive work/family agenda. The policy framework reaffirmed the commitment of the organizations of the United Nations system to create and support the maintenance of a family-supportive work environment, which should promote productivity and enable staff members to respond to the conflicting pressures of work and of family life.

108. Within the framework of the structure and mandate of each organization, the policy should commit organizations to introducing family-friendly measures, including enhanced flexibility in the organization of working time, leave arrangements that would allow staff to meet family obligations, and assistance with dependant care and other family-support services.

4. Security and safety of United Nations staff and associated personnel

109. ACC, at its second regular session of 1995, once again expressed its concern about the security and safety of United Nations staff and associated personnel, and, in particular, about the need for effective measures to enhance the security of United Nations personnel working in dangerous locations. ACC decided to bring this matter to the attention of Member States and called on all Governments to take all possible measures to ensure the safety of United Nations common system staff.

110. Noting that the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (General Assembly resolution 49/59, annex) still had limited application, ACC requested the United Nations Secretariat to propose measures that should ensure that the coverage of the Convention extended automatically and equally to all United Nations and associated staff working in unsafe or potentially insecure situations.

111. ACC also decided to encourage organizations to share and combine resources and experience in the future development of security training, stress management and communications systems that could reduce the risks to which personnel were exposed.

C. Financial issues

112. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions) (CCAQ(FB)) brought to the attention of ACC various financial and budgetary issues including the financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system, the harmonization of financial statements and other related financial issues.

1. Financial situation of the organizations of the United Nations system

113. ACC continued to review the financial situation of the organizations of the system. Statistics collected under the auspices of ACC indicated that, although the financial regulations of organizations with assessed budgets generally provide that contributions are payable on 1 January of the year to which they relate, at 30 June 1995 some $1,395 million, or over 46 per cent of total assessed contributions due for regular budgets, had not been paid. Also at 30 June 1995, cumulative arrears of regular budget contributions assessed for years prior to 1995 amounted collectively to some $947 million, an amount equivalent to approximately 32 per cent of the contributions assessed for 1995. A considerable portion of outstanding contributions for both current and prior years was attributable to the non-payment of some of the major contributors.

2. Financial situation of the United Nations

114. With regard to the United Nations, the general financial situation was a subject of serious concern to ACC in 1995, in particular the implications of the financial situation of the Organization with respect to the overall programme of work. Causes and implications of the deepening financial crisis were detailed, inter alia, in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/50/1), dated 22 August 1995, and in his report to the General Assembly on improving the financial situation of the United Nations (A/50/666 and Add.1-3).

3. Harmonization of financial statements

115. ACC completed its work on the harmonization of presentation of financial statements and issued revised United Nations system accounting standards (ACC/1995/20, annex III), which now include recommended formats for financial statements. Organizations were encouraged to apply the formats and revised accounting standards to the presentation of their financial statements for periods ending in 1995.

4. Other financial issues

116. In the course of its work on budgetary, financial and related questions in 1995, CCAQ(FB), on behalf of ACC, undertook a number of activities. These included the review of the cost-sharing arrangements for jointly financed activities and the review of its practices in examining the budgets for these activities. CCAQ(FB) also prepared an update of volume II of the JIU study entitled "Budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system" (see document A/45/130), which contains comparative data on the budgeting methods and other financial arrangements of organizations.

117. It continued its regular review of productivity improvements, including financial reporting by organizations to their governing bodies and between organizations; the decentralization of accounting and reporting procedures; outsourcing of financial control and accounts examination; the review of travel arrangements and the results of a meeting of European-based travel managers; and improvements in computer systems. CCAQ(FB) continued confidential inter-organization discussions on means of preventing and detecting fraud, and on banking arrangements and cash management. It continued to keep under review the existing arrangements with the Commission of the European Union concerning the administrative and financial conditions for activities financed by the Commission and implemented by organizations of the system.

VII. ELEMENTS OF THE ACC PROGRAMME IN 1996

118. The mobilization of support for African economic recovery and development will continue to be a main concern of ACC in 1996. Following the launching of the System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, ACC members, with the support of the Steering Committee, will closely monitor and participate in a year-long

campaign for political and resource mobilization in the implementation of the Special Initiative.

119. An effective system-wide response to the issues arising from recent and forthcoming international conferences presents a twofold challenge: to maintain a clear focus and awareness around the issues at the core of each conference and, at the same time, to maximize the contribution that the outcomes of these conferences, taken together, can make to lasting development. ACC will continue to pursue and deepen in 1996 the elements of a coordinated and concerted follow-up to recent international conferences, drawing on the work of the task forces it has established for this purpose. Particular attention will be paid in this context to arrangements for sustained follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to promoting a concerted system-wide approach to Habitat II. Attention will also be devoted to the need to enhance system-wide coordination through focused attention on those elements that are common to the results of several of the conferences. The outcome of the discussions on an agenda for development will be particularly relevant in this regard.

120. Enhanced coordination at the country level will remain a key priority. Instruments and arrangements for country-level coordination will be further reviewed, updated and strengthened in the light of General Assembly resolution 50/120.

121. In 1993, following a comprehensive review of its own functioning and of the structures and methods of work of its subsidiary machinery, ACC agreed to a number of measures to strengthen the impact of its work and to streamline its subcommittee structure. It decided that these new arrangements would be reviewed in the light of the first two years of experience. It is expected that this review will be completed during 1996.

122. In the area of personnel, ACC and its Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), will, in 1996, focus on (a) new approaches to remuneration and (b) the changing nature of the human resources function in the international civil service. Both of these issues will be pursued through studies on the costing of human resources and the need to make more effective use of these resources taking into account increasing financial constraints. ACC will also continue to keep under close review the financial situation of the organizations of the United Nations system. It will also concentrate, inter alia, on identifying productivity improvements, including the discussion of recommendations in JIU reports that have system-wide implications: the consideration of financial computer systems under development, and the electronic transfer of accounting and other financial information between agencies, as well as banking and cash management questions. Particular attention in 1996 will be given to the review of the budgets of jointly financed bodies.

Notes

1/ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

2/ See Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Eighth Session, Report and Annexes (TD/364/Rev.1) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.II.D.5), part one, sect. A.

3/ Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20 and Add 1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

4/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

5/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 33 (A/50/33), chap. IV, para. 42.

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COORDINATION QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF THE COORDINATION BODIES

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1995

Addendum

Foreword of the Secretary-General

The improvements I am seeking to introduce within the United Nations, at both the policy and management levels, must be an integral part of a broader, system-wide effort to adapt priorities and methods of work to a rapidly changing international environment.

During the past year, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) has reinforced its capacity to address the main policy issues facing the international community, and to promote and organize joint initiatives towards common objectives.

Enhancing the policy relevance of ACC's work has been, over the past few years, one of my key objectives. My aim is to develop a common policy framework to guide the overall work of the system and, in so doing, to strengthen the Committee's support to the central intergovernmental bodies in the exercise of their system-wide responsibilities. ACC's progress in promoting an integrated follow-up to recent global conferences illustrates this enhanced capacity.

Of similar significance in relation to the work of ACC is the need to sustain a pattern of tangible results in policy and programme coordination and the development of joint initiatives in key areas of inter-agency concern. The

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new United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa developed by the Committee is an important example of such an initiative. ACC discussions on drug abuse control should also do much to improve coordination in this important area, and serve to prepare for a productive consideration of this issue at the forthcoming substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

ACC has a key role in promoting a common assessment by executive heads of the changing environment in which international cooperation and development are taking place, and a shared view of the collective responses required. This should include a common understanding of the expectations of member Governments and the public with respect to the efficient delivery of services; and it should encompass linkages between bilateral and multilateral cooperation and among emergency, post-emergency and development assistance.

ACC's contribution to these ends is complemented by the contacts that I have intensified with the heads of the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization, and other organizations such as the specialized agencies on issues of common concern. These issues often bridge the political and development missions of the Organization. The forum on the future of the United Nations system, held in Vienna in conjunction with the first regular session of 1995 of the Committee, also resulted in a most helpful dialogue between executive heads and eminent personalities who had chaired independent commissions on various aspects of United Nations reform.

A major shared concern of all executive heads continues to be the grave financial situation facing the United Nations, and the overall decline in funding, particularly for long-term development activities. ACC's contribution in this respect is manifold: to appeal to the international community to give renewed priority to development, and to provide the system with the means and resources needed to address the new global challenges facing it; to provide a forum for an exchange of experience on management reform and measures to maximize cost-effectiveness; and to contribute directly to greater cost-effectiveness system-wide, by achieving an efficient division of labour, based on the comparative advantages of each organization.

The work of ACC in the period ahead will increasingly prove a key element in enhancing political support for and confidence in the essential work of the United Nations system.